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THE YOSEMITE WATERS.

BY HARRIET MONROE.

THE beauty of falling waters is like the beauty of birds—delicate, musical, swift of flight and brilliant with many colors. It is like the fragile, laboriously wrought beauty of lace, weaving fantastic patterns out of invisible threads. Like the soft white beauty of snow it is, flaking, drifting, draping the rocks, turning to blue and green and lilac in the sparkle of the sun. It is like the beauty of armies—yes, like the beauty of armies is the beauty of falling waters, of armies that march to victory, shouting and waving banners, and booming their haughty guns. It is like the beauty of the will of God—joyous, not to be questioned, working for its own.

And falling waters have many souls, and none shall gainsay the least of them. Souls of laughing and of weeping have they, of motion and of rest; souls that cry out and others that are still.

Like a flower is the soul of Bridal Veil, like a white lily nodding in the wind. Now the north wind finds her, and tenderly, appealingly, she leans as for succor unto the granite wall; now the south wind seeks her, and she spreads out her filmy robes like a dancer and strews the air with her whiteness. Lovely she is, and her voice is soft, and her breath is sweet and fine like the faint scent of azaleas. With light touches she strokes the mountain and he gives her of himself; yet, though he woo her for a million years, for him she will never change.

And Illilouette flutters like a ribbon in the wind as she picks her difficult way over the steep black rocks. Glad she is with the gladness of a child, careless of danger, waving her hand in the sun. I see the gleam of her teeth as she laughs; I see her slim white limbs and the ripple of her long bright hair. She runs

with swift feet; she pauses not; she wins her way to her play-fellow, the river, who lifts her daintily over the rocks and carries her far, far, through the resisting mountains.

And Yosemite is a poet in a dream, a poet questioning the sky. Tall as a moonbeam, slim as a reed, swayed to and fro by the drift of his dream, he poises light white feet on the heavy earth and crowns his brow with the blue. His dream is of all beautiful things; of moony nights and flowers a-film with dew, of rainbows that sparkle with many colors, of the blue-veined arms of happy maids; even of the beauty of sadness dreams he, of lovers separated forever, of death hushing the voices of little children. Always in his house of light and mist he listens and sings and sighs, and holds the secret in his heart; that none may dream his dream, nor tell his tale of the beauty of it.

And Nevada, haughty Nevada, is a warrior queen whose soul love takes unaware. She goes forth armed for battle; of silver is her breastplate, of silver and jewels her helmet, and her right hand carries a spear. But suddenly she hears a voice and turns; she gazes, and the heart of her is changed. She catches up filmy draperies and robes herself like a bride; she shouts with new joy, she leaps to her cataract lover on the path of the winds. And down in his green gorge he clasps her close and bears her singing onward. Stern and tall and straight is Vernal, her shining round-armed lover; robed in whitest sparkle of white, beautiful and strong. In him the soul of falling waters is a hero, proud of his triumph. He heaps up Happy Isles for his beloved, and films their flowers with his breath. He hews out the earth to build them; he hurls the rocks from his path and commands the mountain to make way. And all the immovable things hearken and obey, for the will of falling waters none shall gainsay.

They have carved the mountains, these soft caressing fingers of falling waters, these delicate foamy touches on the stubborn rock.

They have carved the mountains and cut them through with gorges, and adorned them with rich embroideries of green. For them El Capitan rears his snow-white head to the sun; for them Dome and Half-dome pillar the sky. For them the great sequoias gather the years together on the valley floor and shake their lofty heads at time. For them the pink azaleas pattern the woods

in June and all the little mountain flowers dip their brows in dew.

Beautiful as love in its hope is the beauty of falling waters; strong as love in its triumph is their strength. They wait and sparkle and are still—as light as thistle-down, as soft as air. They gather the plumes of an hundred battles, they sweep on with the passion of peopled worlds. And life is a bubble in the foam of them; it shall burst in the sun and vanish, and the beauty of falling waters shall reckon not that it is gone.

HARRIET MONROE.